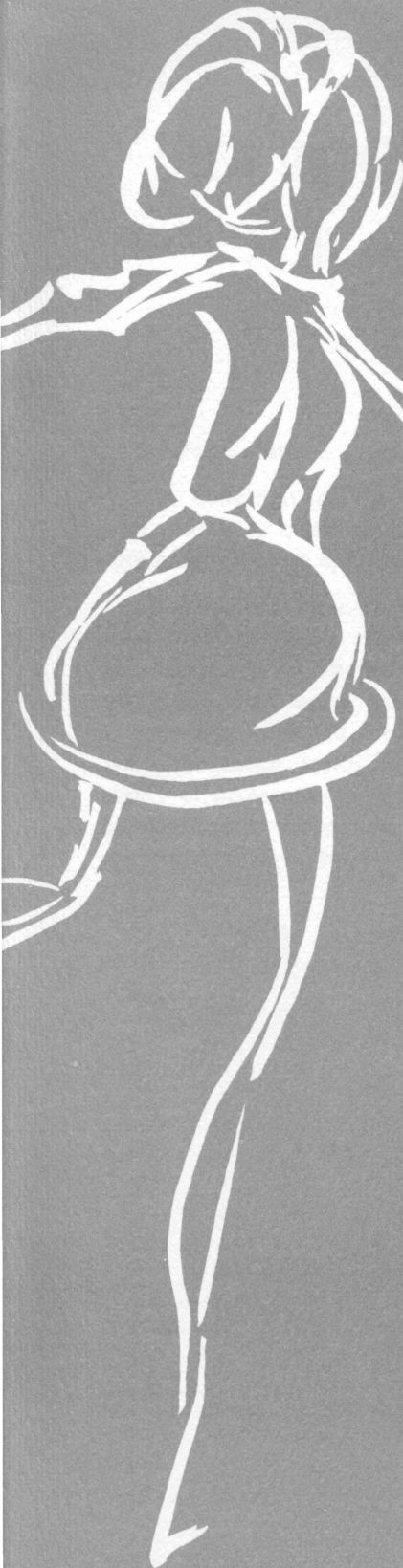


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STEP INTO

ACCESSORIES

FOR A

TOTAL LOOK

Texas A&M University
Texas Agricultural Extension Service
J. E. Hutchison, Director, College Station, Texas

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STEP INTO ACCESSORIES

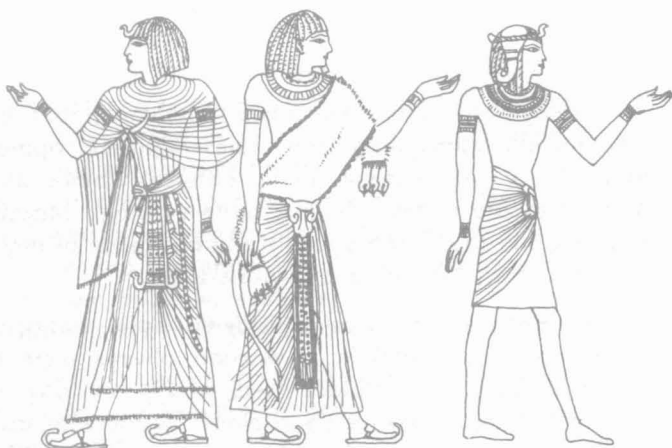
FOR A TOTAL LOOK

Becky H. Culp*

Good taste Fashion Accessories

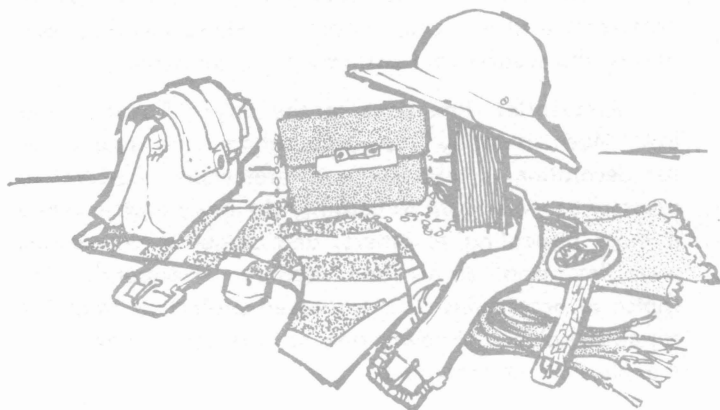
A collection of the little things — accessories — add sparkle to one's appearance, making the total picture of the wearer and costume more attractive.

Accessories date back to the days of Adam and Eve. Much as today, the earliest man wore accessories for decoration, symbolism and protection. Decorative accessories were worn to beautify the body and to make it more appealing to others, and symbolic accessories were for social status and identity. Frequently, the choice of accessories also expressed protection from the supernatural or unknown, and to a lesser degree, from the physical environment.



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Accessories are vital to wardrobes because they add versatility, satisfying individual needs for day-to-day change. They provide opportunities for creativity, individuality and an expression of one's personality. They are a way to update last season's costume in an inexpensive way, thus expanding the clothing budget. Accessories make clothing more becoming to the wearer by emphasizing good features and drawing attention from less attractive ones.



Today's lifestyles have altered clothing habits by relaxing and eliminating many rules regarding appropriate dress. As a result, many different clothes and accessories are suitable for the same activity. Leisure, business and church dress may blend one mode of dress into the other, becoming one-in-the-same.

Accessories were once considered basic additions to clothing. For example, a woman always wore a strand of pearls with a black dress, and a man always wore a tie pin to hold his tie in place. Today emphasis is placed on the total effect of the complete ensemble, rather than considering each accessory individually — shoes, jewelry and hats.



Harmony in fashion begins with the ability to create or select a suit, dress or separates that are balanced and proportioned in design and stimulate interest and emphasis appropriate for the individual. The beauty of the best chosen garment can, however, be completely destroyed by accessories that either lack beauty in themselves or are incompatible with the garment. Each costume component is evaluated as either enhancing or destroying the total picture.

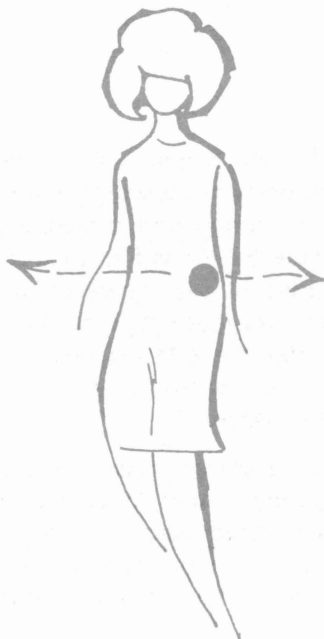
Today's use of accessories expresses freedom to be one's self, to experiment and to express moods. Although fashion no longer dictates absolutes, guidelines exist to help each individual create and obtain maximum satisfaction from clothing and accessory combinations.

Fashion is a form of art. Principles of design have evolved through time which act as guidelines for achieving an esthetically pleasing or beautiful fashion picture. The effect of the various art principles in relation to accessories should be considered in achieving the most satisfying picture of dress for others to behold. Guidelines for the use of line, size and shape, texture and color are examined for each individual to make the most of accessories.

Line

Accessories chosen to complete the ensemble should enhance the major structural lines of the garment. Repetition of line in the costume creates movement within the various parts. Repetition such as that created by a waistline belt and a horizontal yoke ties the costume together.

Drawing the glance to the side of the figure increases the apparent width of the part to which atten-



tion is directed. For example, placing a pin at the side of the waistline broadens the waistline.

Lengthwise and crosswise lines add length or width to the area where they are located. For example, the crosswise placement of earrings adds width to the face, belts add width to the waistline and ankle strap shoes add width to the ankle.



Strong contrasts in line create emphasis in that specific area. Keep accessories to a minimum if a focal point is established in the costume. An ensemble is much more pleasing if only one center of interest is used and other details are minimized.

The size of accessories should be in proportion to the size of the individual and other accessories. For example, a petite figure is overpowered by a large handbag. Likewise, a small handbag makes a large figure appear larger.

A distinct difference in the shape of an accessory can make an article appear completely unrelated to the

Size
and
Shape

costume. With a tailored suit cut on boxy lines, the shape of a rectangular bag would be pleasing.

Texture

A harmonizing texture provides some degree of variation without extreme differences in surface quality or the mood of the costume. For example, a smooth silk garment is incompatible with a corduroy belt. Bulky textured accessories add width. Shiny textured accessories create more emphasis and appear larger than dull-textured accessories; polished jewelry attracts more attention than dull or rough-textured jewelry.

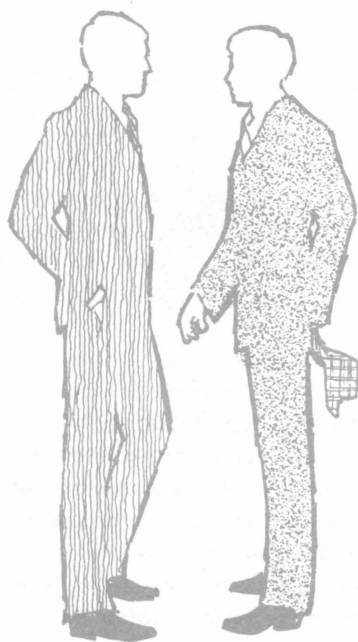
Color

The total effect of colored accessories depends not only on the colors chosen, but also on the proportion in which each occurs and is placed.



Brightly colored accessories are more satisfying if they are concentrated near the face, or at least high enough on the figure and far enough from the edge to achieve a balanced placement. In men's costume, the center of emphasis usually occurs near the face due to colorful shirts, ties and hats.

Bright, contrasting colored accessories direct attention to the area where they are located. Where do you want the attention drawn? For example, colored hose or socks and shoes emphasize the feet.



All accessories in the same contrasting color result in a spotty effect and lack relationship with the basic garment. The total look will be more pleasing if accessories are used as a link between areas of greatest contrast. For example, the pattern in a tie may pick up the colors of the suit and shirt to increase the relatedness.

One splash of color is generally more pleasing than several splashes which compete for a center of interest.

It is important to remember that articles chosen to be worn together should have a common purpose and character. In creating a total picture, each accessory either reinforces or weakens the effect of the sum of all the parts.

Buying Accessories



In our world of rapid change, buying patterns likewise are shifting. No longer are all purchases made with the intent of lasting a number of years. The rapid pace of fashion change increasingly necessitates buying accessories in accordance with the length of time the item will be in fashion. For example, a more traditional item should be of a better quality than that of a more faddish item.

Accessories, more than other areas of apparel, lend themselves to a throw-away philosophy. First, accessories are relatively inexpensive items when viewed as a total category. Secondly, with the exception of shoes,



accessory items do not require fitting and size alteration. Thirdly, accessories are displayed and sold in a bazaar atmosphere. Frequently an article is seen, liked, bought and often worn immediately. Many times impulse buying is the case, rather than the exception to the rule. Notice where accessory items are situated in the marketplace — at the main entrance, adjacent to major traffic aisles or in conjunction with major apparel items suggesting a total look from head to toe.

An awareness of current buying patterns for accessories is of importance in managing the clothing dollar. It's the little things that add up — \$10 here, \$5 there. Don't be guilty of spending a majority of the budget for eye-catching accessories.

Accessories are a vital component of dress. They help satisfy our need for change and beauty. With a relaxed mode of living, there are no rules for dress. Guidelines emerge and assist in giving maximum satisfaction for dollars spent. The most important guideline is to understand yourself and accessorize to express your personality.



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